

Preserve Stewardship and Management on  
Carlsbad Preserves by the  
Urban Corps Habitat Services  
Presented at the Annual Public Meeting  
March 2, 2023

By Gretchen Cummings, Preserve Manager/Biologist and Colin Casey, Preserve Supervisor



# Urban Corps of San Diego County History and Mission of “Learning, Earning, Conserving”

- Founded in 1989
- Nonprofit Organization that is a Local Conservation Corps Certified Annually by the State-run California Conservation Corps
- Charter School for young men and women (ages 18-26) to earn a high school diploma
- On-the-job training that assists with job placement, and career development



# Urban Corps' Stewardship of Preserves

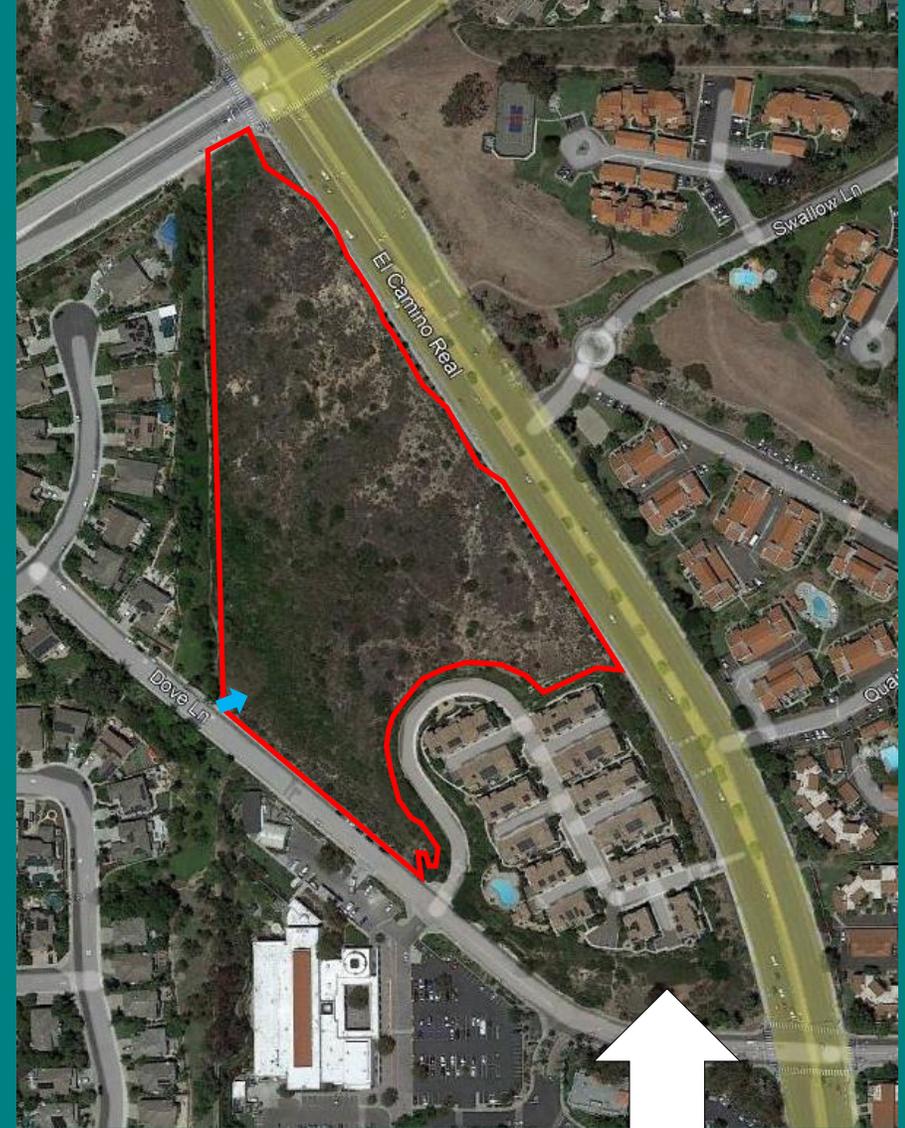
- Stewardship of preserves by the Urban Corps is carried out by a team of stewards consisting of a Preserve Manager/Biologist, a Preserve Supervisor, and Corpsmembers.
- The Preserve Manager/Biologist's duties include biological surveys, training of the Preserve Supervisor and Corpsmembers, scheduling the tasks to be carried out by the Preserve Supervisor and Corpsmembers, managing the budget, and report writing.
- The Preserve Supervisor's duties include overseeing the accuracy and safety of the Corpsmembers work at the preserves, ensuring that sensitive plant and wildlife species are protected, documenting/mapping any issues noted in the field to the Preserve Manager, and establishing goals for maintaining and enhancing the habitats at the preserves.
- The Preserve Supervisor works full-time on the preserves in both the city of Carlsbad and other jurisdictions.
- Corpsmembers go to school 1 day a week and work on projects during the other 4 days. Given this work-school schedule, the core group of 3-5 Corpsmembers assigned to the Preserve Supervisor work at the preserves on a rotating basis depending upon their academic schedule.

**Preserve Manager + Preserve Supervisor + Corpsmembers = Team of Stewards**

# Preserve Management

- Urban Corps Habitat Services Currently Manages 23 Preserves Totaling 756-acres within 8 Jurisdictions (Imperial County, County of San Diego, City of Carlsbad, City of Oceanside, City of Escondido, City of Imperial Beach, City of Santee, and City of San Marcos)
- 6 of the 23 Preserves are in the City of Carlsbad
  - City Ventures Preserve (8.3-acres)
  - New Crest Preserve (0.04-acre)
  - Southern Preserve (55.2-acres)
  - Paseo Del Norte Preserve (1.4-acres)
  - Poinsettia Place Preserve (11.5-acres)
  - Morning Ridge (20-acres)

# City Ventures Preserve – 8.3 Acres



No Scale

# City Ventures Preserve

## 0.13-Acre Voluntary Habitat Restoration



The 0.13-acre restoration area is checked during the general site visits for weeds and success of the hydroseeding and container planting efforts that occurred in 2018. The left photo shows Corpsmembers removing non-native, Creeping Myoporum and Iceplant. The right photo shows the results of the Corpsmembers' careful removal of the non-natives from around the native plants within the habitat restoration area.

# New Crest Preserve – 0.04 acre



KEY

-  Preserve Boundaries
-  Wart-stemmed Ceanothus



  
No Scale

# New Crest Preserve

August 2016

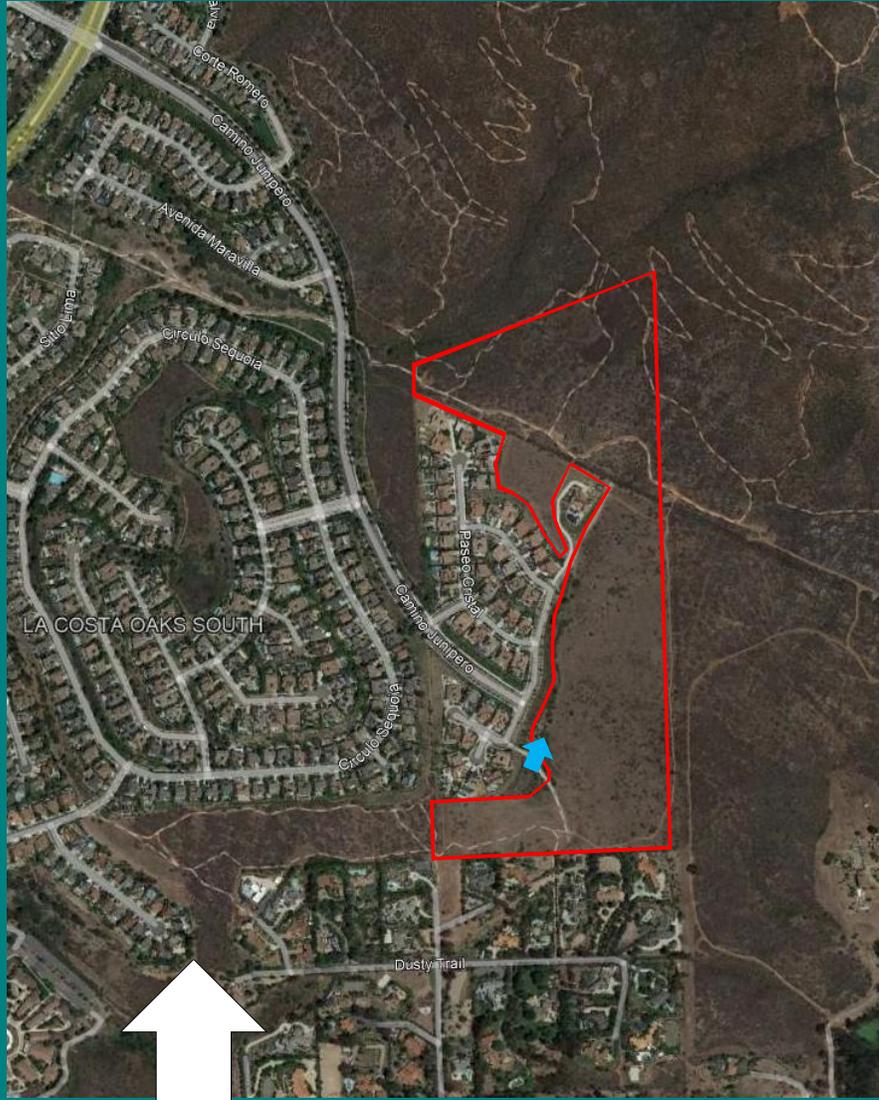


April 2022



The Southern Maritime Chaparral habitat at the New Crest Preserve burned during the Poinsettia Fire in May 2014 but has since recovered.

# Southern Preserve – 55.2 Acres



No Scale



# Southern Preserve

## Non-Native Grassland Habitat – A Sensitive Habitat

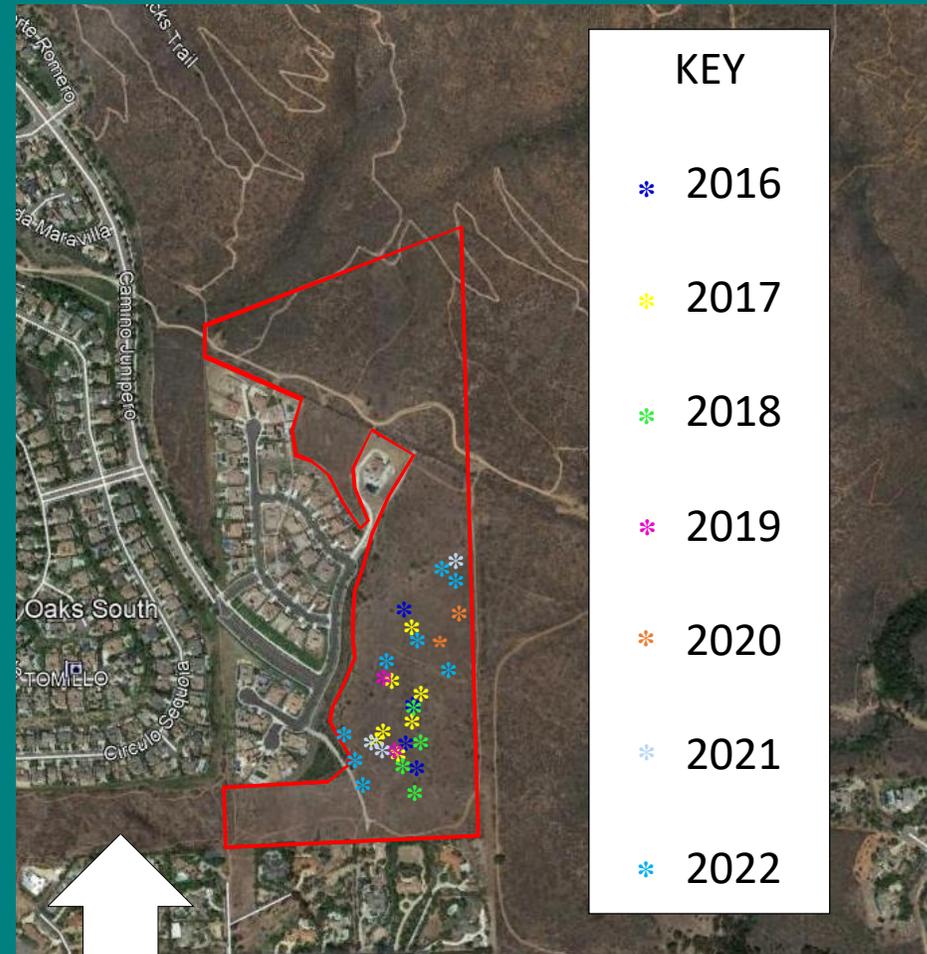


The Non-Native Grassland habitat within the Southern Preserve contains three sensitive plant species, the Small-flowered Morning-glory, San Diego Goldenstar, and Ashy Spike-Moss. It also provides habitat for two sensitive wildlife species, the Mule Deer and Grasshopper Sparrow.

# Southern Preserve

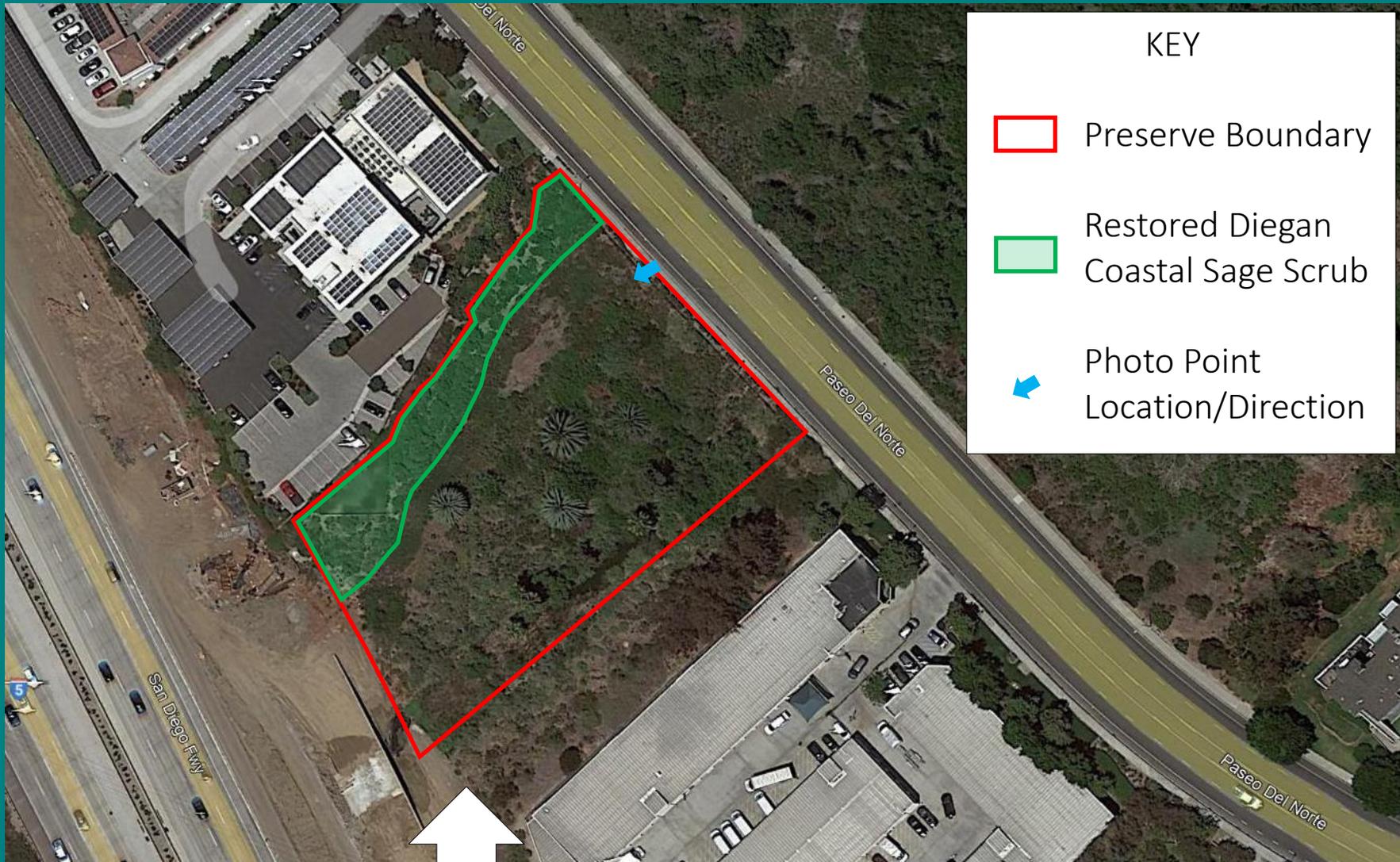
## Use of Non-Native Grassland Habitat by Grasshopper Sparrows 2016-2021

The Grasshopper Sparrow is a small, ground-nesting bird found exclusively in grassland habitat. This species is considered a Species of Special Concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Grasshopper Sparrows have been seen and heard in the southeastern portion of the Southern Preserve for the last seven years between the months of March and June (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022).



No Scale

# Paseo Del Norte Preserve – 1.4 Acres



KEY

-  Preserve Boundary
-  Restored Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub
-  Photo Point Location/Direction



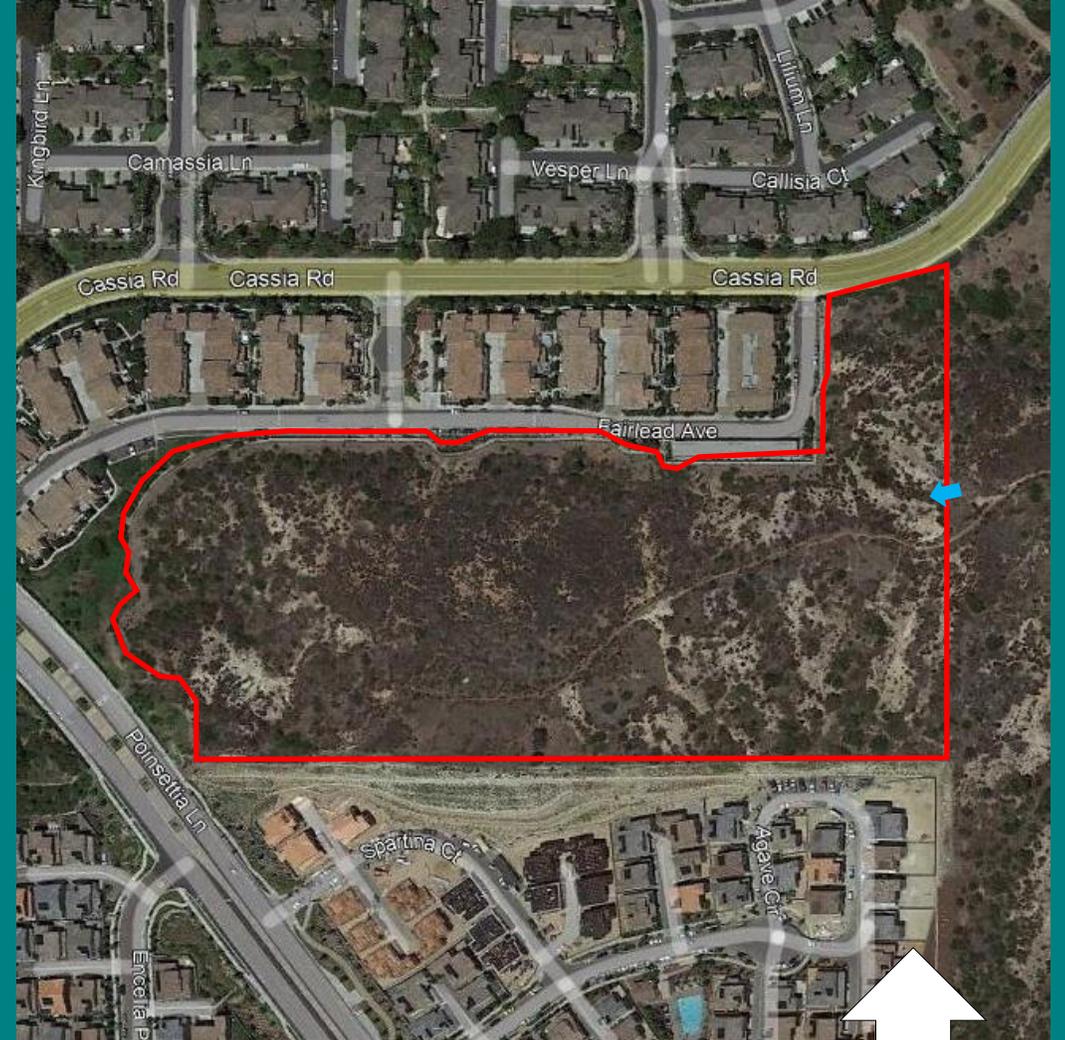
No Scale

# Paseo Del Norte Preserve

In October 2022, the on-site restoration of the Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub habitat was completed. Below are the before and after photos taken from the established photo point along Paseo Del Norte Road. The entire 1.4-acre preserve, including the restored Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub is now under the long-term management by the Urban Corps Habitat Services.



# Poinsettia Place Preserve – 11.5 Acres



No Scale

# Poinsettia Place Preserve – Summer Holly



One of the sensitive plant species found at the Poinsettia Place Preserve is Summer Holly (*Comarostaphylis diversifolia* ssp. *diversifolia*). During the 21 July 2022 site visit, the Preserve Manager mapped and counted 40 Summer Holly. To the left is a map of the 2022 population of Summer Holly at the Poinsettia Place Preserve.

# Poinsettia Place Preserve – Stewardship in Action



Overall growth form of Summer Holly

Papillate fruit

Characteristic striate gray and red bark

As stewards, it is our responsibility to ensure the long-term survival of the Summer Holly on-site. As described earlier, the team of stewards at the Urban Corps Habitat Services consists of the Preserve Manager/Biologist, the Preserve Supervisor, and a core group of Corpsmembers. In order to protect this species, one of the Preserve Manager/Biologist's duties is to instruct the Preserve Supervisor and Corpsmembers on how to identify the species using key characteristics, such as growth form, fruiting structure, and bark.

# Poinsettia Place Preserve – Stewardship in Action



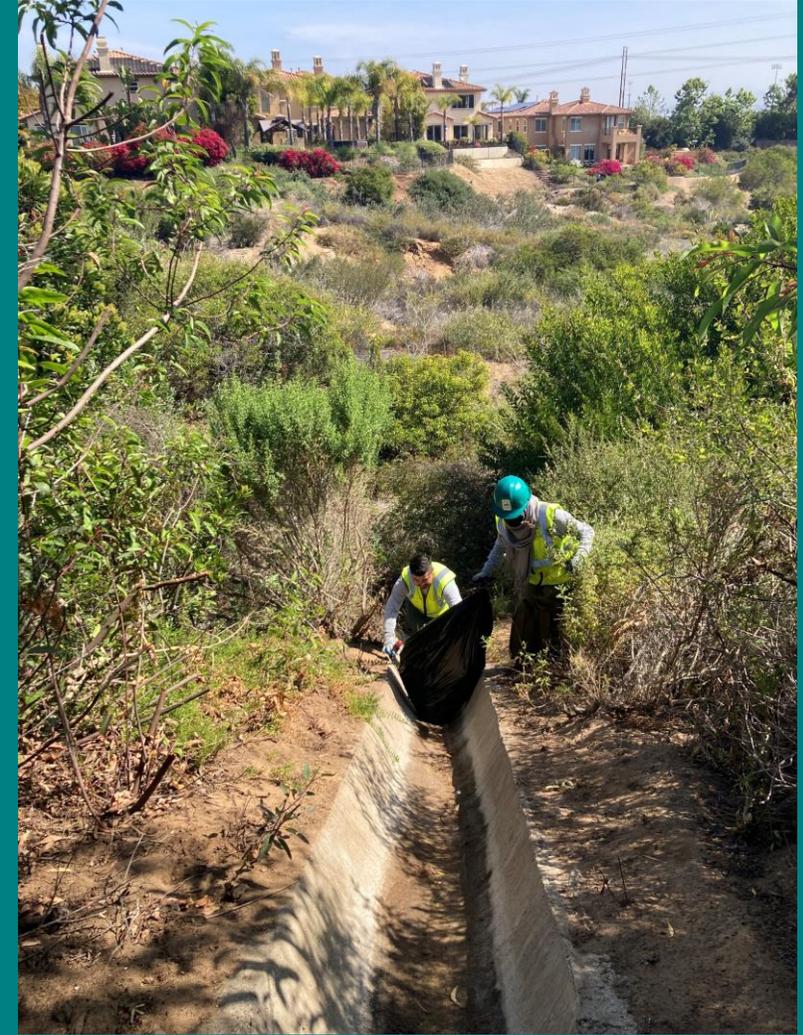
Using the map showing the known locations of Summer Holly, along with the knowledge of how to identify this sensitive species, the Preserve Supervisor and Corpsmembers work together at the preserve to protect these sensitive plants. Above are photos of the team removing an Acacia that had begun to crowd out a nearby Summer Holly circled in red.

# Morning Ridge Preserve – 1<sup>st</sup> Year of Long-term Management



November 2021 to November 2022 represented the first year of long-term management by the Urban Corps Habitat Services at the Morning Ridge Preserve. Initial tasks focused on weed removal. Above are before and after photos of the native habitats being protected from invasion by Crown Daisy. The Urban Corps Habitat Services team identified patches of Crown Daisy along the SDG&E easement within the Morning Ridge preserve that needed to be removed.

# A Few More Photos of Our Hardworking Corpsmembers in the Carlsbad Preserves



Thank you!

Contacts and For More Information:  
Urban Corps of San Diego County  
(619)235-6884

<https://urbancorpsd.org>

Gretchen Cummings

[gcummings@urbancorps.org](mailto:gcummings@urbancorps.org)

Colin Casey

[ccasey@urbancorps.org](mailto:ccasey@urbancorps.org)